



**Washington State Public Health Laboratory
Risk and Safety Assessment
Stakeholder Group Meeting Report
October 23, 2008**

Overview

This was the fifth meeting of the Public Health Laboratories' (PHL) Stakeholder Group. The group has been recruited by the PHL to assist with a risk and safety assessment. The stakeholder group participated in the selection of a consultant to perform that assessment, and has provided advice to the PHL throughout the assessment process. In addition, the group will provide recommendations to the Department of Health (DOH) on the best way to ensure successful communication, over the long-term, with the Shoreline community.

The primary purpose of this meeting was a group review of the *Draft Risk and Safety Assessment Report*. Suggestions from this meeting, in combination with comments from the November 6 community meeting, will be used to revise and refine the draft. The final report will be submitted to the Washington State Legislature in early December 2008.

Attendees

Stakeholder Group Members

Ray Allshouse, *City of Shoreline*
Bill Bear, *Briarcrest Neighborhood Association*
Jeff Flesner, *Fircrest School*
Jim Hardman, *Friends of Fircrest*
Scott Keeny, *Shoreline Fire Department*
Gail Marsh, *City of Shoreline*
Dick Nicholson, *Ridgecrest Neighborhood Association*
Vince Santo Pietro, *Shoreline School District*
Jan Stewart, *Public-at-Large*
Cameron Webster, *King County Sheriff's Office*

Staff and Consultants

Lain Knowles, *Public Health Laboratory, Assistant Director*
Scott Dwyer, *Kleinfelder Consultant Team*
Jonathan Richmond, *Kleinfelder Consultant Team*
Margaret Norton-Arnold, *Facilitator*
Amanda Sparr, *Administrative Support*

Introduction and Overview

Group members shared information about upcoming events:

The Shoreline City Council will discuss the Department of Social and Health Services' Fircrest Master Plan at the next Council meeting, Monday, October 27 at 7:30 p.m.

A "visioning meeting" for the Briarcrest and Ridgecrest neighborhoods will be held on October 29.

Kleinfelder Presentation

Scott Dwyer presented a summary of the *Draft Risk and Safety Report*. The report describes the methodologies used for the assessment, key findings, and recommendations from the consulting team.

A copy of the draft report, along with Scott's Powerpoint presentation, can be found on the PHL website at www.doh.wa.gov/EHSPHL/PHL/RiskSafetyAssm/default.htm

Group Member Comments and Questions

After the presentation, the group asked questions, and provided their comments and suggested edits to the report.

Executive Summary and Report Sections 1 and 2 – Similar Laboratory Locations and Best Practices

- Why is the location analysis relevant? How does it address safety and risk?
Further rationale is needed to support the inclusion of this section in the report.
- The assessment should more comprehensively describe the full range of locations of other labs, including those that are more isolated.
- Even though the practice of locating laboratories in residential areas may have been standard practice for the past fifty years, this does not mean that it is ideal.
- More information is needed on how materials are delivered to the laboratory, how they leave the laboratory, and how samples are destroyed.
- The group discussed whether or not students from nearby Shorecrest High School posed a risk – wouldn't they be more likely to burglarize the Lab? Cameron responded that "commercial burglars" are generally not teenagers. Vince, in his position as a high school chemistry teacher, responded that in his fifteen-year career he has never had students steal any materials out of the high school chemistry laboratory.
- The report appears to overlook the fact that there are adult family homes and care facilities in relatively close proximity to the PHL. Also, the report should note

that several apartment buildings (3-4 stories) are located in this area, and that there are at least five churches in close proximity to the laboratory.

- The location of Fircrest in very close proximity to the Lab should be noted in the report, especially since this is such a vulnerable population.
- The report should note that there are some language barriers in the surrounding community; this is a highly diverse area. In case of an emergency, it could be difficult to communicate with these neighbors.

Report Section 3 – Biological Hazards

- Further clarification is needed regarding biosafety cabinet class levels.
- Why does the Lab have HEPA filtration? This is not a requirement of BSL-3 laboratories; does this mean that the laboratory is operating at a level higher than a BSL-3? Jonathan responded that “BSL-3 Enhanced” means that there are enhanced safety features at the Lab, not an enhanced level of risk. The PHL’s BSL-3 laboratory is only performing the functions it was designed to perform.
- “Select agent” should be better defined.
- The assessment should clearly state that there is not a BSL-4 laboratory at the Public Health Laboratories now, and that there are no plans to construct such a facility in the future.

Report Section 4 – Chemical Hazards

- Are there chemicals at the laboratory that, when combined, could be of particular danger? Scott responded that this was possible, but that the worst combination would be mixing bleach with another cleansing agent; something that is of danger even in normal households.
- The assessment should clearly state that all of the chemicals at the Lab are also commercially available. They are common in high school chemistry laboratories and are also generally available at local drugstores.
- Is there a system to class and store chemicals separately? Also, the classification system for chemicals should be better explained in the report.
- The data on injuries only goes through 2002. This should be updated to 2007-08.
- The report should acknowledge that the ALOHA system is only useful for non-reactive gases.

Report Section 5 – Radiological Hazards

- P32 and P33 are not listed in the inventory; are they still in use? (No.)
- There needs to be a better explanation of what would occur should the wastewater treatment system fail (pg. 71).

Report Section 6 – Physical Hazards

- There should be more information about potential fire hazards in this section, e.g. flammable chemicals, sprinklers, and fire suppression equipment should all be evaluated.
- Data is provided for 2007, but the text references additional years; better explanation of this is needed.
- One of the recommendations on pg. 78 calls for the development of a “unified health and safety plan.” Does that mean the lab is not currently in compliance with health and safety requirements? Scott said yes, the lab is in fully compliance with all regulations, but the plans could be consolidated to improve organization and efficiency.

Report Section 7 – Security

- There is some confusion about Section 7.1; the description of “security and vulnerability system” on pg. 81 seems to be missing something, the content is on pg. 80.
- There should be a recommendation for ways to further prevent access to the laboratory property. Attractive fencing would better serve the lab as well as the surrounding community.
- The conference room is used for community meetings. Is there adequate monitoring and security in this room? The door could be left open, for example, and is there adequate security and lighting on this entrance?
- The report needs to be clear on the level of background checks performed on perspective employees, as well as the level of security associated with hiring practices.
- Security scenarios are discussed on pg. 83, but these should be included in Sections 7.2.2 and 7.2.3

- Table 7.7 states that a number of potential improvements cost more than might be warranted. Why is this included? This was not part of Kleinfelder's scope of work. Also, intruder and truck bomb scenarios for improved security are listed as a high priority, but because those events have such a low probability, those security measures should be given a lesser priority.

Report Section 8 – Earthquake Hazards

- The City of Shoreline has some additional information that will be helpful for this section; there are a few inaccuracies that should be rectified.
- Information about the Whidbey and Seattle faults is not included in this section, even though that information is part of the appendix. It should also be pulled into this section.
- Was there a review of what would happen if the wastewater system failed during an earthquake?
- Information about soil types should also be included in this section. It is good news and is described on pg. 17 of the appendix, but should also be pulled into this section.

Section 9 – Emergency Response Plan

- The assessment should evaluate how the PHL will notify Fircrest, area schools, and the surrounding community about the emergency response plan once it is finalized.
- There needs to be more clarity on the emergency response plan. How much of it is developed now? And how much additional work is needed for it to be complete?
- It is good that there is a recommendation to test the plan with first responders (pg. 94).

Section 10 – Communications Plan

- The assessment should clarify how communication with the community will be handled as the recommendations are being implemented.

General Comments on the Assessment

- The assessment should include a “look forward”, that is, how has this assessment reviewed and factored in any future plans for the laboratory? And how will any future developments at the laboratory continue to be evaluated?
- Jan Stewart said that she had a number of additional edits; she and Scott will meet separately to go through those together.
- Several members commented that they felt the quality of the report was very high and that Kleinfelder had done a good job. One comment that had heads nodding in agreement was: *Any initial concerns I had about whether or not Kleinfelder would be objective have been alleviated. That is no longer a concern for me.*

November 6 Community Meeting

The group discussed the November 6th community meeting. Dick Nicholson volunteered to represent the stakeholder group at the meeting by welcoming the crowd and describing the work of the group. Members will then introduce themselves individually.

Jude Van Buren will give a brief background presentation on the PHL’s work and will describe the Department of Health’s commitment to implement the recommendations in the assessment.

The group provided some advice to Scott for his presentation at the meeting:

- The same Powerpoint you provided to us today will work well.
- Provide demographics on the community surrounding the laboratory, and include information about the other laboratories researched for the risk assessment.
- The “worst case scenarios” approach is really difficult to understand. It needs a better explanation at the meeting.

Public Comment

There were no public comments.

Next Steps

The Public Health Laboratory will hold a community meeting on Thursday, November 6 on the risk and safety assessment.

The stakeholder group will meet for a final time in December to provide their recommendations on an ongoing community outreach program for the Public Health Laboratories.